

Marijuana for Symptom Relief Oversight Committee Minutes 9-8-21

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1:04 pm by J. Romanoff, committee chair.

Attendance

Members in attendance: L. Cragin, J. Gonyea, A. Klingler, J. McSherry, J. Romanoff, S. West.

Also in attendance: T. Bern, F. Janik, K. Lashua, T. Lantery, G. Pizzutillo.

Approval of Minutes

J. McSherry made a motion to approve the minutes from 8-25-21. S. West seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

New Business

J. Romanoff explained his commitment for making a draft document into a formal recommendation for the Cannabis Control Board before 10/1. Each item was discussed of the following document. Motions were made to accept, edit, and delete. J. Gonyea attempted to display (unsuccessfully) document for all to see on shared screen. L. Cragin asserted her written recommendations were not accurately portrayed in the draft document.

Proposed Rules for the Cannabis for Symptom Relief Committee

MEMBER EDIT COLORS:

JIM

Loretta

Dr. Joe

There is established the Cannabis for Symptom Relief Oversight Committee. The Cannabis Control Board will provide a physical location and administrative support including maintaining a web portal. The committee will be funded by the legislature at the annual amount of \$XXX to pay for per diems, administrative costs, expert witnesses/research, and other items. Dr. Joe adds support for a website that could also be used for simple surveys and research. [I'm still researching appropriate budget numbers to include]

Members of the Board shall serve for three-year terms, beginning February 1 of the year in which the appointment is made. Members shall be entitled to per diem compensation authorized under 32 V.S.A. § 1010. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for the unexpired portion of the term vacated.

The Committee managed by a CCB coordinator and shall be composed of the following members:

- (A) Six registered patients (two each from northern, central and southern Vermont) chosen by lottery from a list of volunteers identified through the registry.;
- (F) Three caregivers (one each from northern, central and southern Vermont) appointed

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by [CCB?]; Dr. Joe's comments are about how many caregivers a patient could'/should have rather than whether or not they should be represented on the oversight committee.

(B) one registered patient from outside the dispensary network appointed by XX? [Also proposed by Loretta C] [Seems like this will be difficult to appoint];

(C) one registered nurse appointed by the VT chapter of the ANA and one physician, naturopath or osteopath appointed by?? [who would be good appointing bodies for these specialties?]; [Dr. Joe suggests that medical/healthcare professionals may not be necessary on the oversight committee and that it should be entirely patient/caregiver focused. Having MDs, DO, Chiropractors, NDs, APRNs, RNs, RPhs, RDs and PAs all on board could become unwieldy. Dr. Joe also agrees however that medical/healthcare professionals need to be able to recommend/certify patients with qualifying conditions. .

(D) one cultivator with expertise in medical strains appointed by the members of the Vermont Growers Association?; Dr. Joe suggests that cultivators are represented elsewhere on the CCB advisory panel and need not be on the oversight committee.

(G) one person with expertise in cannabis and public health communication who can speak to the level, quality and efficacy of patient education and outreach from the cannabis registry and the licensed dispensaries.

one nurse practitioner with experience in cannabis for symptom relief appointed by the Vermont Nurse Practitioners Association

(H) For a transitional period of (XX) year (in order to take advantage of existing operational expertise) the Commissioner of Public Safety or his or her designee.

(2) The Oversight Committee shall meet at least six times per year for the purpose of evaluating public input and making recommendations to the Cannabis Control Board regarding:

(A) the ability of patients and registered caregivers in all areas of the State to obtain timely/affordable/safe access to cannabis for symptom relief;

(B) the effectiveness of the Vermont Medical Cannabis registry and the licensed dispensaries individually and together in serving the needs of qualifying patients and registered caregivers, including the provision of educational and support services

L. Cragin notified the committee she was not able to clearly hear motions to accurately record notes at 1:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted, L. Cragin 9/9/21

There was significant discussion among the members regarding both the best format with which to present the recommendation to the CCB, as well as what the end goal of the document should be. Most of the discussion revolved around the formatting of the final version to be presented to the CCB. It was ultimately agreed upon that the final document should be more in line with what is presented to the legislature with leveraging the use of line numbering for quick reference, as well as using underline and ~~strikethrough~~ to identify new and removed language, respectively. It was also decided that any references to whom had made the proposals be removed, and the final format

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merely reflect what the majority of the board voted to move forward as its official recommendation to the CCB.

Chair Romanoff tasked J. Gonyea to take notes and prepare an updated document for further review/discussion at a future meeting.

Chair Romanoff suggested that unless there was any disagreement, it should be agreed to accept the initial three paragraphs of the document and begin focused discussion with what is currently listed as (A) above. Vice Chair McSherry made a motion to accept as presented. Seconded by S. West. No further discussion. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Note: I didn't catch the next 2-3 motions as to who made it or seconded. This was prior to realizing Loretta couldn't hear well enough to capture any details.

Current item (A) proposed as above. J. Gonyea argued that he is not in favor of "chosen by lottery" for several reasons and encouraged that the appointments for these positions should be made by the legislature based on input for those in consideration. No further discussion. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Current item (F) proposed as above. Recommendation to amend the wording to include "parent or guardian" in between Three... and ...caregivers... Another recommendation was to remove ...appointed... and replace with ...chosen by lottery. No further discussion. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Current item (B) proposed as above. Recommendation to remove this statement. Vice Chair McSherry noted that with the transition to the retail market covering both the recreational and medical communities it seemed no longer necessary to address who is or is not within the registry. No further discussion. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Vice Chair McSherry made a motion to amend the current (C) from one registered nurse.. and ending with ...osteopath to "One licensed health care professional with knowledge of cannabis as medicine..." Seconded by S. West. Chair Romanoff requested friendly amendment to amend from one to two which was accepted by the Vice Chair. No further discussion. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Chair Romanoff made a motion to keep current item (D) that includes a member of the Grower's Association with a seat on the board. Seconded by S. West. Vice Chair McSherry offered that there is no need for a grower to be a member of the board as it should be geared to patients and growers have other avenues of representation. He also suggested that a person in this position should be able to speak to "tested, proven, reliable product". Chair Romanoff outlined various reasons for his position. These included overall representation as well as their expertise in providing insight as to whether certain strains of cannabis are viable to be grown in Vermont. In support of this argument, he indicated it would be important to ensure the best cannabis for a particular treatment is even viable to be grown in Vermont. A. Klinger indicated she has concerns with a grower being a member of the board but would support a scientist as a member of the board. No further discussion. Motion did not pass 3-3-0.

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Vice Chair McSherry made a motion to eliminate sections (G) and (H) as listed in the above document. Seconded by J. Gonyea. Brief discussion regarding vague expectations or need for someone with experience in cannabis communication. No further discussion. Motion passed 5-0-0.

S. West left the meeting at approximately 2:00 pm due to a conflict with another engagement.

Discussion then began regarding any recommendations to alter language regarding Item 2 and sub-components of the existing statute. Vice Chair McSherry opened comments by stating that in light of the proposed changes along with the mandate of the new CCB, he saw no reason to continue inclusion of this language or concept.

Chair Romanoff announced that he was suspending/tabling further discussion of the document as there was less than 15 minutes available for public comment and he wanted an opportunity for those comments to be included. The Chair then closed his statement by requesting each person who chose to speak keep their comments as brief as possible given the limited time available.

Chair Romanoff also announced that the intent (pending meeting room confirmation) was to hold the next meeting of the MMR Committee on 9/22/2021, starting at 1:00 pm.

G. Pizzutillo expressed his concern over the apparent lack of willingness/interest in having a member of the new board include a member of the Grower's Association. He expressed support for his argument by noting inaccurate comments by board members related to the types of cannabis plants, including one previous comment about plants "growing 20 feet tall".

F. Janik shared that he strongly disagrees with the recommendation to limit caregivers to only family members. He also spoke to what he believes is the board members focusing on integration rather than patients.

T. Bern expressed he is very concerned over not including members of the growing community with a representative on the new board. He cited that he was very offended by one of the board members referring the members this group as "schmo's" and added this speaks to the need to have this group represented. He also stated of all the meetings he has attended; this was a very difficult meeting to sit through given the discussion.

T. Lantery is concerned over the apparent focus on THC versus including all the various important components of the medical system. He indicated he has been a legacy grower of 33 years and therefore is concerned over a requirement for licensed growers. He also indicated that interacting with a dispensary is beyond difficult given the closest one to him is over an hour drive each way.

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G. Pizzutillo was recognized for one last closing comment where he requested the context of an earlier comment that he had missed involving whether the new board should or should not include a member of the Grower's Association.

Vice Chair McSherry made motion to adjourn at 2:34 pm. Seconded by J. Gonyea. No discussion. Motion passed 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

L. Cragin 9/9/21

John Gonyea – 13 Sep 2021